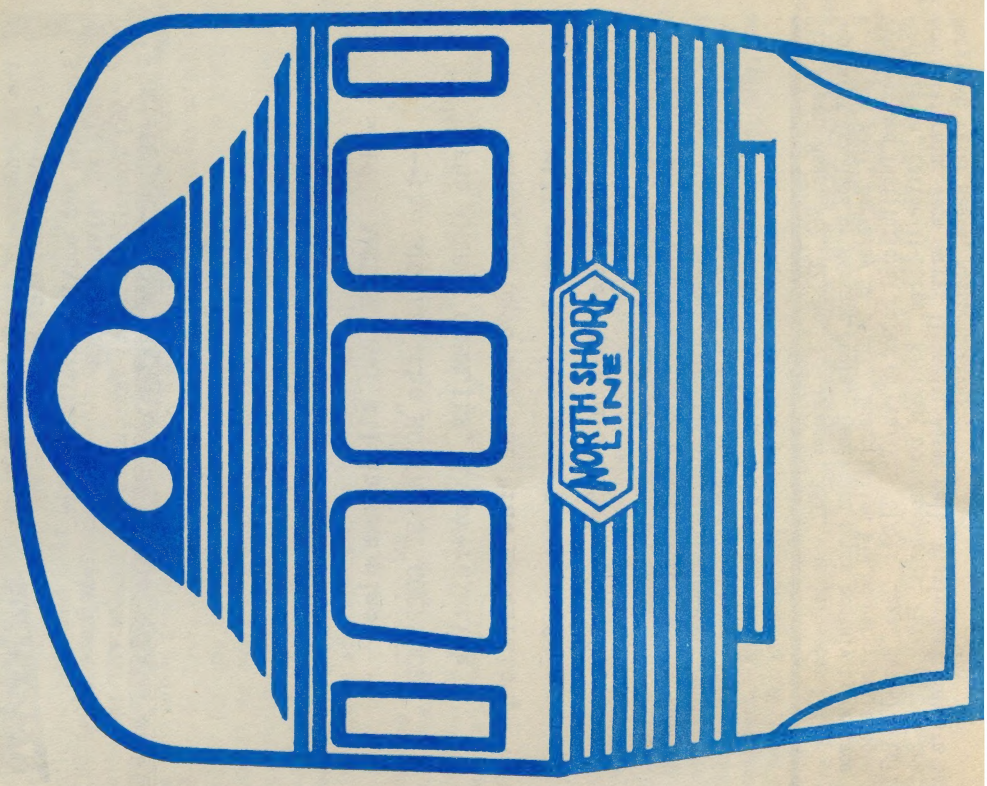
80¢

VOL. 12 NO. 1
JANUARY 1982
ISSUE NO. 237

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS



FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

FIRST CLASS MAIL

FIRST CLASS
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1083
BERKELEY, CA.

To:

Subscribe Now!

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS
P. O. BOX 9007
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

(two issues a month)

Send RTN for _____ year(s) at $19 per year or $9.50 for six months. My remittance is enclosed. This is: a new___; renewal/extension___; gift___subscription.

NAME _____

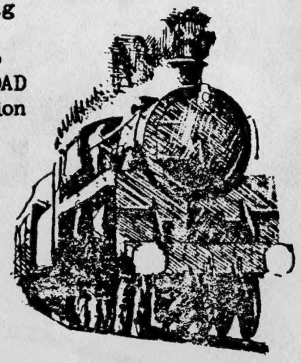
ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

FIRST CLASS

WORLD'S GREATEST RAIL JOURNEYS
by
Voyages Jules Verne

The CHINA & BEYOND brochure contains 15 journeys in or thru China including the 43 day CENTRAL KINGDOM EXPRESS, & 20 day RED ARROW EXPRESS, London to HongKong or vice versa; THE GOLDEN ROAD TO FAR CATHAY by air & rail from London to HongKong via Lenningrad & Moscow, Samarkand, Tashkent, Ulan Bator, etc. There are additional brochures on THE RAJ EXPRESS across the Indian Subcontinent from Khyber Pass to Ceylon while stopping at many of the great landmarks which recall the splendours of the British Raj; and the CAPE TO CAIRO EXPRESS.



Brochures and bookings available thru
SKYLINE TRAVEL SERVICE
563 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC. Canada V6C 1X6
Telephone (604) 685-6102

1981 AMTRAK LAW, all in one place --the AMTRAK, the NORTHEAST CORRIDOR, the AMTRAK COMMUTER, labor-relating laws. I have all the "raw materials", will compile them when I return from Europe, New York mid-February. $30. Anybody interested?

ROBERT J. SWAN
Box 1866
Long Beach CA 90801

Rail Travel News, Vol. 12, No. 1. January, 1982. Whole number 237.
Copyright © 1982 by Message Media.
Published twice monthly by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $19.00 per year; single copy 80¢. Overseas and institutional rates on request. STAFF: James Russell, Editor. Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Southern California; Jack Ferry, Illinois; Adron Hall, Mississippi; Kenneth Maylath, Maryland; Peter Roehm, Massachusetts.

THE COVER STORY

The Illinois Railway Museum in November purchased an articulated trainset of former Electroliner equipment at a cost of about $17,000. The Electroliners of 1941 were streamlined interurban trains of the North Shore Line. That line ceased operations in 1963 and the two trainsets were sold to the Philadelphia Suburban line, where they ran until 1976. The Illinois Railway Museum is now seeking donations to a $30,000 fund needed to move and house this train, called by the Museum probably the most famous of all interurban electric trains. Donations can be sent to the Electroliner Fund in care of the Museum, at Box 431, Union IL 60180. More information on contributions and memberships in the museum is available also from the above address.

LETTERS

I believe John Wegner's letter in RTN 235 relative to the Chicago-St. Louis corridor needs to be corrected. The statement that "Illinois does not pay a dime for any train between Chicago and St. Louis" is fully false. Since Oct 1, 1973 the State of Illinois has been funding the STATE HOUSE under the 403-b program. Presently the southbound EAGLE is partially funded by Illinois.

We fully agree that the present schedule between St. Louis and Kansas City is far better and are certainly glad that Missouri Governor Kit Bond forced a change that Amtrak's Marketing Department should have instigated. The problem is that Amtrak's Marketing people seem to be convinced that there is a big market for travel thru St. Louis and seem hell bent on destroying the schedules on either segment of the runs in order to meet this huge market. Since service began, this huge market has averaged a whopping 16 passengers per day each way!!

The Marketing Department must realize that Chicago-St. Louis-Kansas City are two separate corridors and the schedules on each corridor must be such to meet the greatest market potential on each segment. We congratulate MOKSRAIL for helping to bring about a schedule tuned to the local market. Illinois Rail is working to bring about fast changes in the Chicago-St. Louis corridor wervice to once again meet maximum potential on the line. Ridership Chicago-St. Louis since Oct 25 schedule changes has fallen faster than other Midwest corridors.

Schedules are very important, and I'm afraid that if left completely up to Amtrak's Marketing Department, they would be set to meet minimal travel needs on each run.

Dave Randall, Vice President
Illinois Rail
Alton, Illinois

I would like to comment on an item which appeared recently in "Urban-Suburban Transit" (RTN #235). For those of us who have watched the SP Railroad over the past 25 years, it has been a basic fact of life that any suggestion, thought, or idea that just might help cut costs, improve operations, or in any way enhance rail passenger service was immediately and forcefully rejected by SP management. We saw example after example during the 1950s, '60s, '70s, and there never was an exception.

So it is quite in character to see Caltrans's request to cut costs and improve service by going "push-pull" on the Peninsula commute line as well as extend some runs (over non-SP rails) to the Ferry Building instantly and automatically refused by the powers at SP. And what is so typical is that these two improvements would not "interfere with freight operations" nor in any way compromise or harm SP interests.

page 3

No, this is just one more example of SP's intense and obsessive anti-passenger (anti-public!) mania which has characterized the "Friendly" for as long as most men can remember.

Martin M. McKane
San Francisco, California

WEATHER WREAKS HAVOC WITH TRANSPORTATION

Abnormally bad weather in the U.S. and Europe began early in January and was continuing past mid-month as we go to press.

The situation began with an extremely heavy rainstorm that hit Northern California on Jan 3. From midday on the 3rd until the early morning hours of the 5th, nonstop rain fell. At the height of the storm, train 6, the SAN FRANCISCO

Injured passenger is carried from the derailed ZEPHYR. Berkeley Gazette photo by Michael Russell.

ZEPHYR, derailed just north of the Richmond CA city limits. The train had been held at Oakland because of flood waters along the tracks near the Bay, and at 2:35pm the SP released the train from Oakland with orders to look out for washouts. At 3:04pm, at San Pablo, 2.1 miles east of the Richmond station, while running at 60mph, the train hit an area of track weakened by rain water, and the last six of nine cars derailed, all remaining upright but the last car jackknifing somewhat. Of 147 people aboard, there were 12 injuries, with two being hospitalized overnight.

No Amtrak trains were run past the washout zone until Jan 6. About 50 passengers from the derailed train were flown to their destinations, some were put up in a hotel, and a number of local Reno-bound travelers took rain checks. The inbound train 5 halted at Martinez. Amtrak wanted to bus #6's passengers to it and turn it; however, it was learned that Reno was being hit by 100mph winds, and the decision was made to annull the train that day (and the next). Train 5's passengers were bused from Martinez to Oakland. The SAN JOAQUIN operated between Bakersfield and Stockton only, with buses between Stockton and Oakland. Train 14

the northbound COAST STARLIGHT, terminated at Oakland, with passengers bused to Redding where they were put on the southbound STARLIGHT which had terminated there and was turned. The northbound STARLIGHT equipment became train 15 after that train could not run from Sacramento to Oakland; passengers were bused from Sacramento. On Jan 5 the northbound SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA, train 18, terminated at Oakland and was turned to become the southbound STARLIGHT. Twelve buses were used each direction for STARLIGHT passengers. Train 5 that left Chicago Jan 3 was halted at Ogden due to storm conditions and turned to become the easterly portion of the derailed train, with passengers bused Ogden to Oakland.

On Jan 6 all routes were back to normal but operating with delays due to slow orders. Coverage of the derailment in the media was overshadowed by coverage of the rainstorm, which claimed at least 31 lives in Northern California, mostly due to mudslides. For the storm's effect on public transit, see Urban-Suburban Transit.

Most of the remainder of the nation suffered record low temperatures in the long cold wave, including the South. It was called the coldest storm of the 20th Century, and it carried wind chill factors of 100 below zero in some places. The death toll from the weather reached over 250 as we went to press, with Illinois counting the most fatalities. New York City had its first major snowstorm of the season on Jan 13. The weather virtually paralyzed transportation in much of the nation, but trains had relatively minor problems--nothing nearly as bad as the Amtrak problems in the winters of 1973-4 and 1976-7 with steam-heated equipment.

On Jan 13 an Air Florida 737 jetliner with 80 aboard took off from Washington's National Airport bound for Florida, in a blinding snowstorm. Within moments it crashed into the icy Potomac River, striking the 14th Street bridge as it came down and smashing some automobiles on the bridge, missing by 1000 feet the Potomac River railroad bridge that carries Amtrak's Florida trains, the CRESCENT, and the CARDINAL. A total of 78 people perished in the crash, including at least four on the bridge. Five were rescued from the plane. It was the first fatal U.S. airliner crash since Oct 31, 1979 when a Western Airlines DC-10 crashed in Mexico City, killing 70.

About 30 mins later, a Washington Metro subway accident killed three people (see Urban-Suburban Transit).

National Airport was closed again after the crash (it had just opened before the fatal takeoff), and several airlines asked Amtrak to accommodate passengers for them, in mostly NE Corridor travel. Amtrak said the number of such passengers was not large, but noticeable.

England and the Continent were hit by similar weather. A rail strike began in England on Jan 14, to further compound transportation woes.

RAIL CANADA

VIA IS RUMORED to be planning to discontinue the overnight CAVALIER between Montreal and Toronto. These rumors are sparked by questionnaires which are being given to passengers, which include ominous questions like "How would you travel if this train were not available?" Altho sleeper business on the train is good, there is practically no coach business, and of course no mail or express. Week night loads are often less than 100.....

GO TRANSIT EQUIPMENT was used on southwestern Ontario trains on the holiday weekend.....

NEW TRANSIT MAGAZINE, RTN-style, had its debut with the Jan 82 issue. It's Transit News Canada, published every two months, with a promise of greater frequency in the future. Subscription is $8 per year to: T.N.C. Publishing, 651 Wavell Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2A 3A9.

80 TRAIN PASSENGERS attempting to travel from Ottawa to Northern Ontario on Dec 23 were left behind in the station because only one 80-seat RDC was operating on the run. VIA said it simply forgot about an extra Dayliner in storage in Sudbury that could have been used. The crowd, stranded for five hours before two chartered buses arrived, included a blind woman and several mothers carrying infants. Cursing VIA and Transport Minister Pepin, passengers complained also of lack of control in boarding procedures at the station. VIA said that station personnel have been cut from 20 to 11 with Pepin's passenger train cuts.

CANTRACK AUTO-TRAIN is the name of a proposed cross-country service that would run like the former U.S. Auto-Train, and operate into the U.S. as well. Entrepreneur Robert Dorsey of Montreal recently applied to the CTC for an operating license, and officials are saying there are no legal obstacles to the proposed service. Dorsey hopes to fill in some of the holes left in Canadian rail passenger service with the Nov 15, 1981 cut of some 20% in VIA service. Dorsey would operate 30-car trains, running to Canadian resort areas in summer and taking traffic south in winter. Dorsey said he'll need $25 million to buy 90 pieces of rolling stock, build terminals, etc. Terminals would be located in Toronto, Montreal and Fredricton.

TRANSPORT MINISTER PEPIN is hoping that the Ontario Government will pick up the tab for expanded commuter service in the Toronto area. Ontario Transport Minister James Snow has suggested that the arrangement for crewing, maintenance and track use that VIA has with CN and CP Rail be extended to Ontario's GO Transit system.

OTTAWA'S NEW DOWNTOWN VIA office (at Metcalfe & Sparks) is doing $2-3 thousand in business per day, while VIA had expected only $300-500 daily. This downtown office was suggested by Transport 2000 and CRLA.

7:00am OTTAWA-MONTREAL train has been moved to 7:30am. Critics say that this change will lose VIA half the train's clientele.

VIA-1 FIRST CLASS service has had the breakfast removed.

PROVINCE OF ALBERTA is talking of a high-speed train connecting Edmonton and Calgary, to be funded and operated by the province, and beginning operation by 1990. A study is to be issued by spring and a decision made by 1983 on the TGV-type service which might run in the Highway 2 median south from Edmonton as far as Red Deer and then on a new right-of-way. A 90-min nonstop service between the two cities is envisioned.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

WASHINGTON METRO SYSTEM had a fatal accident on Jan 13, the first in its history. Three passengers were killed and about 22 injured at 4:30pm when an eastbound Blue Line train near the Smithsonian Institution Station derailed the last car as it was being backed thru a switch under manual control. Automatic train control was inoperative, for unknown reasons. The backing maneuver was precipitated by a stalled train around which other trains had to be guided. Car 1029 was crushed against a concrete tunnel separator, ripping out 12 feet of its side. The train was jammed with government workers being sent home early because of the snowstorm (see also article on pp. 4-5), and uninjured passengers had to walk thru the subway to the Smithsonian Station to be bused on. The city was virtually immobilized by the snowstorm and the airliner crash (see page 5).

GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT ferries between San Francisco and Marin County, recently under strong attack because of high subsidy requirements, got a boost in the severe Jan 4 rainstorm. The Golden Gate Bridge was closed to auto traffic for about two days due to mud slides north of it, and the ferries became a welcome and useful alternative for commuters. San Francisco Examiner editorialized favorably about them.

SOUTH SHORE LINE expects to have its first prototype new rail car on hand by late Feb or early Mar. The test car is being shipped from Japan, where it is manufactured using over 51% U.S. components. Illustration here is from the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, who said the first car passed initial field and engineering tests in Japan during the first week of December.

NEW YORK'S MTA plans to the auto toll from $1 to $1.25 on the East River bridges, effective late Feb or early Mar, to raise funds for the 5-year capital improvement plan for subways and commuter lines.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY in Chicago is proposing to electrify the Rock Island commuter line, and wants a study made of the costs and potential savings. If it works out, the Burlington line might be the next one done. Another question is the one of electric self-propelled cars vs. electric locos.

★ AUTO-TRAIN EQUIPMENT AUCTION BUYERS

The following list gives buyers of passenger cars from Auto-Train Corporation's December auction. The name given is not necessarily the primary owner of the car(s) purchased.

Kenneth Nichols, Anbel, Houston TX: Domes 905, 907, 909, 911, 912, 704, 460, 470, 543, 706; dome diner 802; domes 700, 705, 707, 512; diners UP8006*, 804, 590, 570, 592, 803; sleepers UP9005*, Amtrak 2241*, 250, 630, 203, 206, 631; steam generator 1139; coaches WP coach unidentified*, 1940*; buffet cars 595*, 597*, 599*; bi-level 17; bi-level cabooses 3, 12, 6.

James L. Stookey, Maryland Midland Railway, Frederick MD: dome 706.

John Kirchanski, Western Rail Services, San Rafael CA: dome coach 514.

John Lucki, Convention Cassettes, Atlanta GA: dome coach 700.

Ed Braun, Roan Equipment Co., Bakersville NC: dome 462, buffet 580.

Rosie O'Grady's, Orlando FL: buffet 598.

Delaware Otsego System, Cooperstown NY: domes 510, 511, 515, 524, 522, 520; buffet 594.

Falcon Safety Products, Mountainside NJ: full dome night club 540, diner 800.

C. C. Potter, Cincinnati OH: dome coach 513.

Great Western, San Francisco CA: dome coach 523.

James E. Strates Shows, Taft FL: dome coaches 708, 703, 464; sleeper 202; caboose 91; bi-levels 4, 28, 27, 21, 16, 20, 5, 26, 15.

Al Nippert, Cincinnati OH: baggage 191.

Merrill Ervin, Kankakee IL: dome coach 902.

A. J. Daniel, Tulsa OK: dome coaches 701, 709; diner 807.

The Charter Mfg. Co., Milwaukee WI: business car 1.

C. T. Richman, Tampa FL: sleeper 206.

The Bywater Co., Orlando FL: dome coach UP 9014*.

Antique Enterprises, Tampa FL: dome diner UP 8001*.

Wilson Engineering, Cleburne TX: dome coach 471.

Don Gage Inc., Jamestown NY: dome coaches 461, 521; diner 808; kitchen dorm 591; cabooses 93, 92.

White Auto Parts, Kissimee FL: night club dome 542; baggage 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196.

Ronald Buhro, Walbridge OH: dome coach 463.

Walt Hoffman, Longwood FL: boutique caboose 418.

Keene Carpet, Honaker VA: dome coach 702; sleeper 252.

WINTERING IN FLORIDA
by Walter E. Zullig, Jr.

We made our annual pilgrimage from New York to Florida in December this year rather than February because of a family function. Our southbound trip was on train 87, the SILVER METEOR, leaving New York on Dec 24. We arranged to take the SILVER STAR back in order to get a train with a conventional dining car, and as it turned out we did get conventional equipment (one of the four equipment sets is now a combination of Heritage Fleet and Amfleet II cars). The set we had was scheduled to be replaced by another Heritage/Amfleet II set the day after we rode it, we were told.

Our departure on Christmas Eve was on what appeared to be a nearly sold-out train. We'd made the reservations in early October, but still this was the only day for which we could obtain two double slumbercoach rooms. No "Week of Wheels" cars were available even then, but I eventually obtained one by calling Amtrak about 10 days before departure.

The southbound train had 18 cars, of which the last four were sleepers--two 10/6 cars to St. Petersburg, one 10/6 and one slumbercoach to Miami. Quite a change from previous trips which had six or seven sleepers to Miami alone. The Heritage Fleet equipment was in fine condition and the trip was most enjoyable. The new "Modified III" dining service really was okay and reasonably priced. It was far better than the "Microwave specials" one gets on the Corridor trains. Apparently they are striving to gradually improve it on a low-budget basis. Both diner and train crews were most friendly.

Some of the Heritage Fleet rebuilds are equipped for handicapped passengers. The coaches so equipped have a wide door at the vestibule end, a big washroom with sliding door, and a single coach seat at that end of the car. The sleepers have a wide door at the vestibule end plus a long roomette with a sliding door. This roomette appears to have replaced Roomette 10 and the public washroom at the end of the car. All rooms are equipped with individual thermostats which work. I hope they stay in that condition.

We arrived in Jacksonville 10minutes ahead of schedule, and the head-end power was immediately cut off for the switching just as I began to shave. Since our car was under the canopy, it was necessary to shave in near darkness--that's one disadvantage of the HEP.

But this was not nearly so bad as the HEP problem on the southbound train the day before--told to me by several crew members as well as a group of passengers we encountered on our return trip: train 87 that left Washington on Dec 23 had no electric power all the way from Washington to Miami. A cable had failed and the train had no interior lights, air conditioning, or hot food. And the train got 4 1/2 hours late in the process of attempting to repair the defects.

Both the SCL and the FEC had closed down for the Christmas weekend, and Amtrak's were the only trains on the railroad between Jacksonville and Miami. We spent 10mins at Mabel siding awaiting train 98 and only four minutes at United siding where a good meet was staged with train 92. Arrival at Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood were ahead of time, and we were into Miami 12mins early--the first time that has ever happened to me during many trips to Florida.

FEC and SCL freight did not start to run until the evening of Sunday, Dec 27. Naturally there was lots of freight activity to pursue the following week. The weather was a beautiful 85 degrees, so some part of each day was spent at beach or pool. I explored some new locations for photography as well as my usual haunts, and my son Craig joined me on a few of the expeditions to try out the new camera he received for Christmas.

One of the SILVER METEOR consists I photographed had two or three Amfleet II cars. These are recognizable by the wider windows and the vestibule door at only one end of the car rather than both ends as in the original Amfleet design. I didn't get inside one, but I imagine the new cars will prove superior to the type of equipment (ex-NYC coach!) I rode in on the trip north.

Our time in Florida came to an end on Jan 2 and we boarded train 92, the SILVER STAR at the new Miami station. Train 91 pulled in at 12:55 (due at 1:13pm) just as we were unloading our rental car. Train 92 was on track 2 with an SDP-40 engine and ten cars. Track 3 was occupied by about 6 or 8 dead SDP's which have now finished their careers and will be rebuilt.

At Auburndale another SDP and seven more cars from St. Petersburg were added to our train to form train 82. We were in the diner during the switching there, and I was able to note the St. Pete section's consist as the cars moved past our window--sort of a lazy railfan way!

Our last regular dinner in the diner was okay but not like a few years ago. The Steward was courteous but very sad, and I assume that he was about to lose his job after many years of service. During discussions with some passengers, he mentioned that "Alan Boyd has stated publicly that his only interest is running commuter trains." The service already had been downgraded somewhat by the use of paper tablecloths and dirty Xerox copies of the former menus. Craig and I duly recorded on film our family's last meal in an Amtrak "full service" diner.

Here are more observations from the northbound trip on trains 92/82:

(1) Tickets were collected at a check-in desk in the Miami station and on the platforms at other stations. I assume Amtrak has had problems with persons boarding without reservations.

(2) The police were called at West Palm Beach to deal with a double-sale dispute. One family had boarded a bedroom in Miami with a proper ticket but were not shown on the manifest. At Fort Lauderdale a second couple showed up with tickets for the same room and proper listing on the manifest. These people eventually agreed to accept roomettes, but were very angry since the trip had been postponed two days because of a previous double sale which Amtrak had discovered before train time. Also, the computer sold a Bedroom E in car 8201 which has but four bedrooms. That party also accepted roomettes which were open due to a few no-shows.

(3) My wife had a roomette in "Cardinal", a former B&O 16-duplex roomette, 4 double bedroom car; the children and I had coach seats. We selected seats in ex-NYC coach 5684 so as to be next to my wife's sleeper. The seats in that coach were very hard and obviously had not been upholstered in years. The "Roger Lewis" pruple slip covers had merely been put over the old NYC brown. Only one leg rest coach was on the train--probably because most of those cars have been converted to Heritage Fleet or are awaiting work at Beech Grove. The other three standard consists for the STAR each contained quite a few non-leg rest coaches.

(4) We were 17mins late out of West Palm Beach but into Sanford on time. Much of the Auto-Train equipment was on hand there under guard by two guys from a "Rent-a-cop" outfit who came out to meet our train.

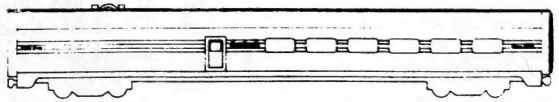
(5) Five ladies boarding at Jacksonville (at 10:47pm) for Hamlet NC (5:36am) spent most of the night in the washroom lounge as they didn't like the hard coach seats!

(6) Quite a few Clemson fans were on board returning from the Orange Bowl game. Thirty persons detrained at Columbia SC and nine at Camden.

(7) Savannah arrival was 10mins early and the Columbia stop blocked a wide street from 3:30 to 3:43am. I guess nobody cares at that hour.

(8) Upon entering the diner for a late breakfast we were told that most of the menu items were "sold out." We did have a reasonably good breakfast, but there were many complaints, especially as to the lack of milk for children.

Heritage Fleet



(9) A 25min delay (from which we never recovered) ensued at Richmond while food supplies were procured from a local supermarket. Question: Why didn't the crew radio ahead so the supplies could have been ready for us upon arrival? I first learned of this when the engineer asked the conductor why he wasn't getting the highball. The diner couldn't have been stocked too well at Miami--it had run out of vodka before West Palm Beach!

(10) Delays due to need for two stops at several stations such as Alexandria, Baltimore and Trenton. In particular, it appeared that the platform had been shortened at Alexandria; perhaps it's just under repair.

Our northbound train was filled to capacity and must have handled over 650 riders during the trip. One conductor said there were 700 on board, but I can't believe it could have been quite that full!

For those of you who used to ride the Auto-Train, "Shirts Blanton" is still functioning. He was in a wheelchair in the doorway of his house in Ashland VA, waving to the train with a towel.

Our New York arrival was about 6:18pm, which would make us 31mins late. We exited quickly, rushed up to 8th Avenue, grabbed a cab and reached Grand Central by 6:38pm in "ample" time to make the New Haven's 6:40pm Stamford Local back home to Larchmont NY.

Amtrak did rather well this trip--we got to Miami 12mins early and back to New York only 31mins late. Overall performance was quite good; the Heritage Fleet and Amfleet II are long overdue but, of course, we'll miss the traditional dining car service.

STANDING ROOM ONLY

MAKING IT THRU THE BUSY LAST WEEK OF THE YEAR ON THE AMTRAK SYSTEM

The week between Christmas and New Year's is one of the busiest times on the Amtrak system--or on any transportation system. It's also one of the most hectic times and one of great interest to the train watcher who observes how passenger train operators cope with the inevitable numerous problems of overcrowding, cold weather, etc.

In the five-day period of Monday, Dec 28 thru Friday, Jan 1--New Year's Day--a total of 2351 standees were reported on Amtrak trains. On the 28th there were 587: 20 on train 407 at New Haven, 125 on train 94 leaving Baltimore, 40 on train 22 the EAGLE of Dec 27, 15 on train 303 the ANN RUTLEDGE leaving Chicago, 47 on train 409 at New Haven, 200 on train 173 at New Haven, 30 on train 182 at Philadelphia, 20 on train 26 the PIONEER leaving Portland, 10 on train 41 the BROADWAY LIMITED at Harrisburg, and 80 on train 25 the PIONEER of the 27th arrving Portland. On Tuesday the 29, 323 people were counted standing: 50 each on trains 168, 183, 170 and 407, 27 on train 40 the BROADWAY LIMITED of the 28th arriving Harrisburg, 60 on train 20 the CRESCENT of the 28th at Baltimore, and 36 on train 796 the MOUNT RAINIER at Centralia. As the New Year's holiday neared, the crowds grew, and on Wednesday the 30th there were 598 standees: train 94 the COLONIAL had 150, there were 80 on train 168, 50 on train 95 the COLONIAL leaving New York, 200 on train 173 leaving New York, 35 on train 142 leaving Philadelphia, 63 on the PIONEER train 25 of the 29th at Hood River, and 30 on train 753 the WILLAMETTE VALLEY arriving Eugene. New Year's Eve was the heaviest day of this period, with 693 standing passengers counted. Train 173 at New Haven had the most--300--while train 183 at Newark reported 200, train 192 at New Haven had 50, the NORTH STAR #10 of Dec 30 had 85 leaving Duluth, train 20 of the 30th the CRESCENT had 25 into Washington, and train 40 the BROADWAY LIMITED of the 30th had 33. On New Year's Day itself, a low travel time, train 95 the COLONIAL leaving Newark had 150 standees--the only train reporting them that date.

More than the normal number of unexpected occurrences happened on the Amtrak system this week, particularly early in the week.

On Monday the ADIRONDACK, train 68, suffered an engine failure 16 miles north of Ft. Ticonderoga NY. Engine 343 could not be restarted, and there were no D&H freight engines in the vicinity, so D&H engine 408 was sent from Ft. Edward, 22 miles south of Whitehall. Meanwhile, Amtrak engines 344 & 345 were sent from Albany to Whitehall. The D&H engine pulled the train into Whitehall (arriving at 6:10pm), where the Amtrak engines took over. The train was delayed a total of 5hrs, 9mins. At Albany the Amcafe was restocked, and free food was given to passengers for the rest of the trip into New York. There were a lot of customers waiting at Albany, so a second section was run from there into New York, on the regular schedule.

The ILLINI, train 380, consisting of engine 374 and bi-level cars 9621, 9620 and 9601, was hit by an auto at a crossing in Gilman IL. The car couldn't stop because of ice on the pavement. There were no injuries, but car 9621 (a cab car) had minor damage and the train was delayed 31 minutes.

The CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, train 58, was delayed 68mins at Gluxstead MS, just north of Jackson, with an equipment failure on engine 296. ICG engine 6030 was added ahead of it.

Corridor train 168, with engine 928 and 12 cars, suffered a blown insulator on the engine's main generator and came to a halt at 11:32am. Engine 961 was sent from New York to power the train, which lost 89mins.

The CRESCENT, train 19, lost 72mins when it hit an auto abandoned on the track 5miles north of Danville VA. There were no injuries or train damage.

The SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, was delayed 113mins after trailing engine 234 caught fire at Cajon CA due to fuel oil leaks. State Forestry firemen extinguished the flames and Santa Fe engine 8070 was added on the point to Barstow.

On Tuesday Dec 29 a BN freight derailed one car at 12:25am at Fisher River MT, 79 miles west of Whitefish, blocking the single-track line. The westbound EMPIRE BUILDER that left Chicago Dec 27 was delayed 295mins, and the eastbound train of Dec 28 was delayed less than an hour. At Spokane, 150 passengers awaiting the train were advised to return later.

The departing BROADWAY LIMITED and SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR at Chicago were both delayed when lounge car 33009 on train 5 being made up derailed and blocked two tracks. Train 5 was delayed 173mins, train 40 73mins.

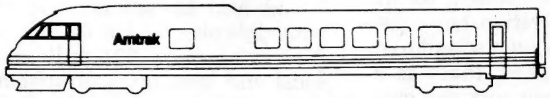
Today's MONTREALERS in both directions were delayed at Bellows Falls VT when the Star Hotel there caught fire and a wall collapsed onto the tracks.

Corridor train 182 was terminated at Newark when a piece of metal was found to be protruding vertically from the roof of car 21814. 320 passengers were transferred to Conrail local #3728.

On this date the COAST STARLIGHT detour between Portland and Chemult on the BN began, as detailed last issue. One correction: the first train to detour got as far as Oakridge OR before being returned to Portland to begin detour.

The CITY OF NEW ORLEANS was 65mins late leaving Chicago because of difficulty in watering cars 4002 and 21883 in the cold weather. It was 15° there, with two inches of snow on the ground.

Northeast Corridor train 173 was delayed 90mins after hitting debris at 5:22.



Wednesday the 30th saw an ICG freight derailing at Fulton KY at 4:45pm, blocking both tracks. Both CITY OF NEW ORLEANS trains detoured over the ICG from south of Effingham IL to Fulton KY, with buses for passengers from missed stops. Train 59 lost 139mins, train 58 120mins.

Unnamed Empire Service train 483 was cancelled after it was sideswiped by engine 338 upon leaving Albany, with no passengers and no injuries and no derailment. Engine 338 had had its brake shoes replaced, but the brakes had not been reconnected when it was moved, and it could not stop, and struck Turbo unit 161 (fireman's side) on #483. Train 72, the ELECTRIC CITY EXPRESS, was also annulled between Schenectady and Albany and 45 passengers were taxied that distance. Turbo unit 159 substituted for 161 on train 72, and it left Albany 66mins late.

Connecticut Valley Service train 407, consisting of SPV's 994 & 999, struck an auto at 10:11am in Meriden CT, which had driven around the crossing gates. The train was delayed 42mins.

The PALMETTO, train 89, (6 cars & engine 279) had engine troubles near Alexandria and was delayed 80mins.

A bomb threat was phoned into Amtrak's New York office at 2:01pm. The CRESCENT, train 19, was inspected at Newark with 77mins delay and nothing found.

The BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, left Pittsburgh 110mins late because the connecting train 441, the CAPITOL LIMITED, with 8 cars and engine 272, hit debris on the tracks at Gaithersburg MD, damaging an air line and delaying it.

SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 5, left Chicago 205mins late because car 32024 had its toilet system frozen in the 10° weather, and car 32056 had to be substituted.

The MAPLE LEAF, train 64, was delayed 95mins at Albany with mechanical problems.

Corridor train 190 had no food service between Philadelphia and New York because the attendant overslept and didn't show up.

(continued on page 14)

HOW THE "MAY 28 SLAUGHTER" WILL HURT AMTRAK

By FRANK BROWNING
PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — John Lombardi has worked there for 10 years. Joe Bellino had put in eight; Tom Phoebus, 10; Fletcher Prouty, nine and one-half; Phil Held and R.K. Hagopian, about the same. They and a score of others like them were widely regarded as the most talented and experienced men on the executive team — people who had been with the company almost from its first day of operations. And then they were gone.

The company they worked for is Amtrak, and the official reason they were fired is a 25 percent personnel reduction brought on by Reagan administration cutbacks. But among many present and past Amtrak employees, there is a growing suspicion that the cuts have been specifically designed to gut the company of its most talented executives and thereby bring about a corporate collapse that could not be affected through direct congressional action.

"I'd love to know why they picked so many senior people that no company would eliminate unless there were some other reason," mused Phil Held, a nine-year veteran who has spent his life in the railroad industry. "There's no college that will train somebody in that kind of experience in transportation."

Held was fired on May 28, just as he was directing the most sensitive reorganization of the Amtrak reservation system ever undertaken, an operation that could not be completed for another five months.

One week before his own dismissal, Joe Bellino, director of Industrial Liaison, was awarded a special bronze plaque in praise of his work developing national emergency contingency plans with the Pentagon. At a special ceremony, Amtrak president Alan Boyd personally told Bellino that he had a long future with the company.

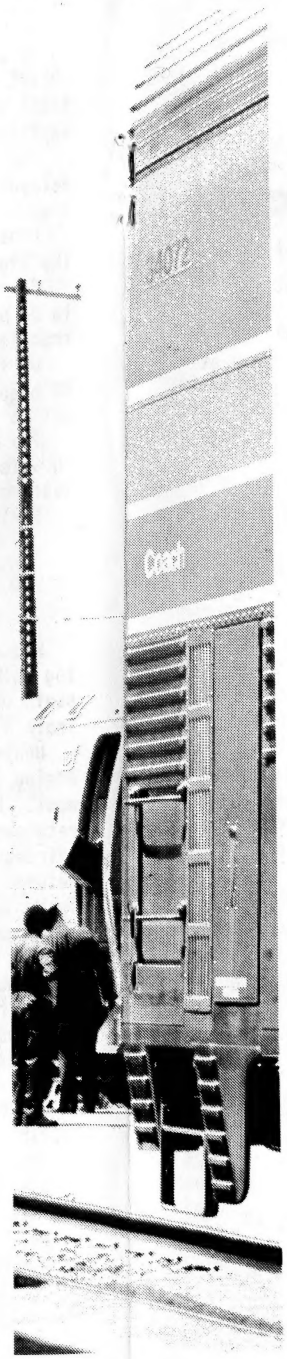
John Lombardi was in charge of planning for Amtrak's forthcoming assumption of the northeast commuter services currently operated by Conrail — a function that will more than double the company's manpower.

Tom Phoebus, who had developed the Amtrak ticketing system, the largest and most complex in the country, was released and then rehired as a ticket clerk.

C.R. Dismukes, director of Taxes and Insurance, was responsible over the last eight years for paying some $31 million in local and state taxes throughout the nation. He was fired without notice.

A few weeks before the "May 28 slaughter" when most of these firings were announced, vice president for operations Bob Herman was removed from his job and given a minor post at the Washington Union Terminal. Herman had supervised the daily operation of trains coast-to-coast, with special responsibility for the busy Northeast Corridor, where his experience, first with the Pennsylvania Railroad and then with Amtrak, reached back more than 20 years.

Fletcher Prouty, fired from a job as senior director of Public Affairs in which he wrote all the key planning documents and speeches for Amtrak's last three presidents, believes the pattern of executive firings is part of a careful strategy developed by the Department of Transportation to wreck the company.



Said Prouty: "It is a method of dismantling the corporation, almost innocuously. They're throwing out the real people who have done a good job and leaving behind the crud. The process is under way and it's very effective."

Prouty is bringing suit against Amtrak for discrimination in its choice of layoffs, charging that there was no equitable policy developed to guide the dismissals. As many as 100 of the 400 laid-off employees are reportedly preparing similar suits.

Amtrak president Alan Boyd categorically denies that there was any such discrimination in the dismissals, or that there has been outside administration interference in the company's management.

Prouty, however, claims that his supervisor, vice president for Public Affairs Jim Steiner — a former member of the Reagan administration's transition team — regularly canceled vital public affairs programs that had long been part of Amtrak policy. Specifically, Prouty said, he was forbidden to contribute articles on Amtrak to such prestigious almanacs as Jaynes World Directory of Railroads and the McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, both of which solicit material about the passenger trains of the world.

Despite early attacks made on Amtrak by Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis last spring, public and congressional support for passenger trains remains remarkably high. Demand for seats has been at record levels throughout the year. Even the Republican-controlled Senate recently spurned the president's transportation budget and approved a higher spending limit that would mandate Amtrak to run a money-losing train through West Virginia and Kentucky, although the railroad itself was ready to drop it.

"Amtrak was one of the first budget-cutting proposals Reagan made that the public reacted to negatively," said an aide to Rep. Henry Reuss, D-Wis., chairperson of the congressional Joint Economic Committee. "Every office on the Hill got huge stacks of mail in support of Amtrak — far more and far sooner than the complaints we heard on school lunches, Medicare cuts, even Social security.

In Prouty's view the selective firings are simply "a clever maneuver to effect broader budgetary cutbacks that they couldn't accomplish through Congress." More importantly, he argued, reductions in maintenance, and removal of experienced staff in the maintenance division, could so hamstring the system that it may cease to operate at all.

"Some days last winter we had only 11 spare cars in the whole system. That system will simply stop when it gets as few as eight to 10 cars short. At that point, you just can't pull cars off the tracks or repair them, and when that happens the whole thing will collapse because key connections in the system simply won't be there."

The issue for Prouty and many of the other executives who were dismissed is not merely a question of alleged firing discrimination. Rather, they argue, it is a pressing need to maintain and expand a coherent passenger railroad system in America at a time when Japan and Western Europe are devoting more resources to rail ser-

vice as an alternative to the automobile. Pro-rail sentiment also seems to be rising in Congress.

If Prouty and his associates are correct in their prediction of a massive breakdown just at the beginning of next summer's high tourist season — a tourist season that also will coincide with many key congressional campaigns — then a great many people might conclude that the Reagan transportation policy is no way to cut a budget — or to run a railroad.

Amtrak®

STANDING ROOM ONLY (continued from page 11)

Chicago's cold weather also delayed the departures of trains 3, 7, 40 and 59 because of various leaks in the cold equipment.

The last day of the year was the busiest of this period. It was still 10° in Chicago, zero in Minneapolis, 16 in Ogden, 26 in New York. At Downie, Idaho at 4:20am, 20 miles south of McCammon, a UP freight had a drawbar failure and then the lead engine froze up. The PIONEER's schedule was disrupted; train 26 of yesterday was delayed 155mins and the previous day's train 25 was delayed 150mins. Train 6 of the 30th was held at Ogden for train 26, losing 143mins.

The SILVER METEOR, train 97, was delayed 170mins at Hawthorne FL, between Ocala and Waldo when engine 383 had a generator failure. SCL engine 1572 came to the rescue.

The NIAGARA RAINBOW, train 62, was delayed 66mins when there was an electrical fire in Turbo unit 158 just west of Albany. The train was towed back to the station and unit 154 substituted.

The Deland FL station was set on fire at 2am, as reported last issue. However, the ticketing and waiting area were put out of service, contrary to our earlier report.

A passenger boarding the LAKE SHORE LIMITED at Toledo, bound for Rochester, had his suitcase stolen. In chasing the culprit--who was not caught--the passenger missed the train and took a bus instead while his wife and infant child were on the train.

Sleeping car 2913 on the PIONEER, train 26 of the 30th, was bad-ordered at Salt Lake City due to an infestation of vermin. Two passengers complained of numerous insect bites.

On the first day of 1982, the washed-out track on the COAST STARLIGHT route between Eugene and Chemult was restored at 4:30pm. The southbound train detoured (reaching Chemult 337mins late), but the northbound train leaving L.A. today ran the normal route. Tomorrow a stub section of train 11 of Jan 1 will run Oakland-L.A. with one engine and four cars.

The southbound STARLIGHT that left Portland yesterday hit a pickup truck at Chiloquin OR 37 miles north of Klamath Falls, with no injuries or train damage, but a further delay of 90mins.

The ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 347, with engine 365 and 3 cars, left Chicago on time, but the engine conked out a short distance out, delaying it 70mins.

The westbound EMPIRE BUILDER got out of Chicago 67mins late after repairs to the air bags of cars 34024 and 31039.

The CRESCENT, train 19 with engine 974 and 17 cars was delayed 85mins at Philadelphia with pantograph problems.

Train 47, the PENNSYLVANIAN, was delayed about an hour at Philadelpha because of possibly diluted fuel oil in engine 270.

And thus one year ended and another began on the Amtrak system.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

AMFLEET II CAR delivery has been put on a "permanent hold" because of a strike at Westinghouse Air Brake Company, supplier of brakes for the new cars. The strike has been on for two months and is now affecting completion of further cars. Amtrak said on Jan 15 that it now has 14 Amfleet II coaches on hand, and one lounge. Two sets of SILVER STAR equipment now are electric-powered and include Amfleet II cars. Altho the remaining two sets are still conventional, steam-heated equipment, conventional dining service continues on all four STAR trainsets, Amtrak said. This is because the crews that operate the diners work on all sets of equipment, and the food supply is also interchangeable. HEP diners have convection ovens, in addition to microwaves, so food can be prepared conventionally in them.....

BOARD OF DIRECTORS of Amtrak will meet next on Jan 27 (the last meeting, on Dec 9, was a combined Nov-Dec meeting--see RTN 235). At that time, the Board will have a different membership: there will be nine members, as follows: Crete B. Harvey, the only women member, who as owner of Harvey Arabian Farms in Illinois is a breeder of Arabian horses; Samuel E. Hellenbrand, VP-Real Estate Operations for International Telephone & Telegraph since 1971, was with Penn Central 1968-71; Frank W. Jenkins, Attorney of Ambler PA, on the SEPTA Board of Directors; Ralph T. Kerchum, Transportation Consultant of Oakland CA; John Fowler, DOT General Counsel; Mark Knouse, Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation; Arthur Teele, UMTA Administrator; DOT Secretary Drew Lewis; and Amtrak President Alan Boyd. Lewis and Boyd are automatically Board members. The first four names were appointed by President Reagan, and the White House announced them in a Dec 30 press release. The remaining three were appointed by Alan Boyd, and all were members of the team of temporary appointments made by the White House in September to fill in until the next permanent Board was formed. Three of these names require Senate confirmation--presumably the three appointed by Boyd...

★ ★ ★

THE NORTH STAR'S 403-b contract from the state of Minnesota expired Jan 5. However, the state requested an extension of time from Amtrak before discontinuing the train so it could pass a supplemental appropriations bill to continue funding it. Amtrak agreed to give it until about Mar 5, two more months.....

SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA still has no train name sign in the Los Angeles station, as of Jan 10. Station officials reportedly said they have received no official word that the train has been named, and therefore they cannot put up a sign. Trains 15 & 18 were named in a contest held by Caltrans.....

A CONRAIL FREIGHT derailed three of 88 cars on Jan 14 at 11:40am just outside the tunnel immediately south of the Baltimore station, blocking both tracks. Northeast Corridor traffic was tied up until 2:30, when one track was opened with a 10mph speed limit in effect and 20-30min delays.....

ARROW RESERVATIONS COMPUTER system is "greatly improved", Amtrak said, and gradual improvement is shown each day. Due to the relatively low call volume at this off-season time, most callers can now get thru to Amtrak, but the rail corporation admitted that there are still some periods when 20% of calls are lost.....

THE CARDINAL'S REINSTATEMENT on Jan 8 went smoothly, Amtrak reports. The westbound inaugural run out of New York had 12 passengers in the sleeper--a favorable showing of over half-full on the first run. The consist of the first train 51 at Washington was: engine 363 (F40), baggage-mail 1126, lounge number unknown, coaches 4007, 4609, 4014, sleeper 2915 "Pacific Hills." Cars are all Heritage Fleet rebuilds.....

CHRISTMAS DAY IS always a light travel day, and altho there were no standees on the Amtrak system this past Dec 25, there was no lack of excitement. Train 21, the southbound EAGLE, derailed one car at Joliet IL, not far out of Chicago. The last car, Superliner coach 31015, derailed as the train was traveling at 8mph in the ICG yard. There were no injuries. The car couldn't easily be removed without taking the next car too, so that was done, and the snack coach 34025 was left behind with the 31015. Thus there was no food service until St. Louis, which the train reached at 1:40am, 2hrs, 55mins late. The main track was blocked until 2am on Dec 26, so the ANN RUTLEDGE, train 304, detoured over the Santa Fe between Joliet and Chicago. Before the derailment, the EAGLE was four cars with engine 364. The ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 347 (3 cars behind engine 237), at 7:34pm struck a trailer that had fallen from a BN freight train at Downers Grove IL. Debris from the trailer wedged itself under the engine and the first car, 21144. The train was terminated and the passengers were bused on, with a 5-hour delay. The damaged equipment was towed back to Chicago, arriving there at 1:33am. The Chicago-bound train the next day was cancelled because of the equipment being tied up in the shops. Car 20038 had to be shopped for two pair of damaged wheels. The PIONEER, train 25, was delayed 52mins at Layton UT, west of Salt Lake City, when it (with engine 225 and six cars) struck an unoccupied automobile. Engine 225 suffered minor damage.....

THE HOOSIER STATE, train 318 on Dec 24, arrived in Indianapolis at what might have been a record time for earliness--10:06pm, 39mins ahead of schedule. Conrail had cleared the line so the train could speed into that city when a passenger gave birth to a 7-lb, 5-oz boy. Both mother and baby were reported doing fine.....

★ ★ ★

AMTRAK PACKAGE EXPRESS service is headed by former Federal Express man Jack McHale, who aims to generate $20 million in business for the rail corporation in this fiscal year (Distribution magazine reports that Amtrak took in about $4 million in FY 1981, from about 1000 shippers obtained mostly thru word-of-mouth). Amtrak is supposed to have a pick-up and delivery arrangement completed about now with some national courier company. Magazine publishers seem to agree that Amtrak's pretty reliable schedules are an advantage, and McHale is reportedly counting on such publishers to give Amtrak a lot of its new business. Other advantages Amtrak has for publishers is downtown station locations and an established relationship with the Postal Service. (Distribution magazine said that Amtrak had $11 million in postal contracts last year).....

51,077 PEOPLE DIED in highway and street accidents in 1980, according to DOT information released just before year-end. The DOT noted that drunk driving, widespread failure to use seat belts and other restraints, and a mix of more smaller cars with larger trucks and lagging highway maintenance were the chief causes of the "continued high rate of traffic deaths".....

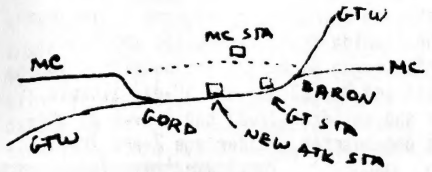
JAPANESE NATIONAL RAILWAYS will open two new Bullet Train lines this year: the Tohoku line in June, and the Joetsu line in November. These two regions will be connected with Tokyo by the high-speed electric trains. The two lines are about 5 years behind schedule because of budget problems and (this seems strange to U.S. rail advocates:) protests from environmentalists.....

A SPECIAL TRAIN for the Rotary Club was being run Oakland CA to Reno NV on Jan 17. Carrying 13 Superliner cars, the train was leaving at 6:40am.....

AMTRAK FAMILY DAYS are reportedly being planned for San Diego some time in March and for San Francisco later in the spring, possibly May. A set of about 8 cars would be brought into the Fisherman's Wharf area of San Francisco, using the SP Peninsula commute line and the Belt Line Railway in S.F.....

THE HARRISBURG LINE had 20.5 miles of continuous welded rail laid in 1981, Amtrak said.....

DINING CAR USE on Amtrak seems to have dropped remarkably with the introduction of airline-style service, if experiences on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR are any indication. On the train that left Oakland on Dec 30, over 400 people were aboard, yet only half of the diner was in use and space was always available, reports a reader--a situation unheard of during the Christmas travel season.....



BATTLE CREEK STATION, tho still under construction, is now open. The station is on the Grand Trunk lines, and trains from Chicago now cross over to the Grand Trunk at Gord at the west edge of town, travel on the Grand Trunk for a mile or so, and return to the Michigan Central at Baron, the junction where the lines cross. But the MC tracks have been torn up across Baron and that line seems to have been relegated only to industrial use thru town. (And Amtrak paid for the junction on the north side of Baron in 1975)..

★ ★ ★

FORT LEONARD WOOD Special train was run again this year (see RTN 216) for Army personnel at the Missouri base. The westbound train, seen in St. Louis on Jan 3, had the following consist: engines 387 & 262; cars 1209, 2915 "Pacific Hills", 7612, 7602, 20033, 7002, 7615, 7600, 20016, 7613, 7609--not an all-Amfleet train like last year. In addition, Amtrak ran Fort Jackson Special trains between New York and Fort Jackson, south of Columbia SC, northbound on Dec 16 & 17 and southbound on Jan 4 and 5. On both of these special runs there were a number of tickets issued with too-early departure dates on them. We don't know what role the Arrow computer may have played in that mixup.....

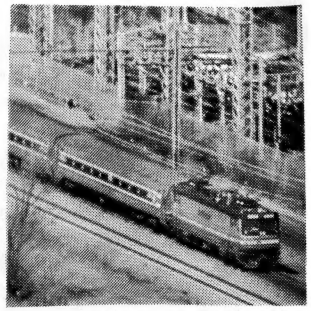
COLORADO AND SOUTHERN Railway Co. was merged into Burlington Northern Railroad Co. on Dec 31. The BN RR has leased to the Fort Worth & Denver Railway Co. the former C&S stations Denver and south (in Denver, FW&D will be a tenant line of BN, having, for purpose of line-haul traffic, access to all industries served by the former C&S). Former C&S stations Denver and north, including Golden CO, are now part of BN RR. The BN system now consists of: Burlington Northern RR (BN); Fort Worth & Denver (FW&D); Burlington Northern (Manitoba) Ltd (BNML); Burlington Northern (Oregon-Washington) Inc (BNOW); Walla Walla Valley (WWV); and Camas Prairie (CSP). The BNOW consists of the Oregon Trunk which was merged into the Oregon Electric. The Oregon Electric then had a name change several weeks after the merger, to BNOW. Papers have been filed to merge WWV into BNRR. BN has only a 50% interest in CSP. The UP has the other 50%. However, management of CSP alternates between BN and UP each year. (This year it is BN's turn).....

★ ★ ★

NEW AMTRAK ADVERTISING: The Jan issue of National Geographic magazine carries a repeat of the two-page ad showing Point Arguello CA from the window of the COAST STARLIGHT. Amtrak's 10th Anniversary year has only 3½ months left, but the corporation has just begun running 10th Anniversary Fare newspaper ads headlined "Now's the time to see the country from our point of view." The ads note that "On Amtrak, you don't watch the view from a distance. You ride right through it, relaxed and ready to take it all in." The ad covers two discount fares: (1) the $10 return trip fare on Eastern trains, detailed last issue; (2) a See Level Fare for Western and transcontinental trains, described below. The reinstatement of the CARDINAL was advertised in newspapers on its route with large ads headlined "On January 8th, Amtrak's rails will sing again. The Cardinal comes back". The ad pictures an empty, glistening railroad track stretching to the horizon. It also mentions the $10 return fare that starts Jan 10.....

SEE-LEVEL FARE was announced by Amtrak on Jan 8, and it's available between Jan 15 and Apr 24. Somewhat like the former USA Rail Pass, it comes in four

price levels: for trips west of Chicago: 14-day ticket $350, 30-day $440; for transcontinental trips: 14 days $430, 30 days $520. A ticket is good for unlimited travel and stopovers on all transcon and Pacific Coast trains, including unreserved trains. The fare may be combined with Family Plan or military discounts and may be upgraded to sleeping accommodations at an extra charge. The only restriction is that a passenger may not travel over a route segment more than twice. The fare is not applicable to Metroliners and some trains running south of Alexandria VA, including the Florida trains where the separate $10 return fare program is in effect. Trips begun on Apr 24 are permitted to continue until May 7 for the 14-day tickets and May 23 for the 30-day tickets. Amtrak said that with the ticket a spouse and children 12-21 can travel at one-half the adult fare, and children 2-11 at one-quarter. Under age 2 are free.....



AMTRAK'S AEM-7 LOCOMOTIVE fleet grew by three recently, the corporation said this month, bringing the total to 37 out of the 47 ordered. One undelivered loco was destroyed recently in a fire at the EMD plant in LaGrange. The number of that engine will be omitted from the series of completed numbers and another to replace it added at the end. In the photo, an AEM-7 locomotive pulls Amfleet cars in NE Corridor service. ASEA photo.....

AMTRAK'S AVERAGE SPEED is now 55mph, comparable to the highway speed limit. As recently as 1979 it was 49mph, Amtrak said in December. One reason for the faster speeds (which do not include station stops) is that the freight railroads of the U.S. have invested about $15 billion in track and right-of-way improvements since 1979, and Amtrak has benefitted from that investment, being able to slash 47 hours from schedules in the last six months. Amtrak said that an improvement of 6mph in two years is a "major accomplishment", when all facts are considered, including the slow speed limits that many small towns enforce. Besides the railroads' track improvement, the following have helped Amtrak run faster trains: the $2.5 billion Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, state-supported track improvement (such as New York's $96 million in the Buffalo-NYC corridor, Michigan's contribution of $3.3 million between Kalamazoo and Michigan City IN, and California's recently-earmarked $1.4 million for improvements on the L.A.-San Diego line), and a multi-faceted grade crossing improvement program. Amtrak also noted that the average age of its 300-unit locomotive fleet is now 3.3 years, compared to 20 years at Amtrak's inception in 1971.....

★ ★ ★

THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED carried Actress Shirley Jones and her husband, comedian Marty Ingels into Kansas City on Jan 8. They occupied bedroom suite D & E on the train from L.A. On Jan 9 they participated in a telethon to raise money for leukemia research. On Jan 10 they boarded the westbound train to return to L.A. About four miles east of Hutchinson KS the fuel pump of the lead engine gave out and the train stopped dead until mechanics dispatched from Newton could arrive and make repairs. It lost 4½ hours. Electrical power was not out, however, because the rear engine continued to supply it. Ingels abhors flying, and travels by train. Consist of the stricken train was engines 254 & 223, cars 1248, 1235, Hi-level 39929, Superliners 31034 & 34018, Hi-level 39971, Superliners 38013, 32040 and 32023.....

ANOTHER FUEL PROBLEM hit the eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED that left L.A. Jan 11. Fuel filters clogged up at Osage City KS, between Emporia and Topeka, killing engine power. The train was only 6mins late at Emporia, but 6hrs, 20mins late at Topeka. In a rather novel move, Amtrak removed passengers from the train at Topeka and bused them to Kansas City, with a rest and food stop along the way. Two

Santa Fe engines brought the train into Kansas City, and there passengers reboarded it. It left at 2:35pm and reached Chicago 7½hrs late. Consist of this train was: engines ATSF 3539 & 3053, Amtrak 282 (off at Newton for train 3), 331 on at Kansas City from train 342, and 292; cars 1130, 1208, Hi-level 39910, Superliners 31019, 34014, 33019, 38000, 32066 & 32006.....

THE SOUTHBOUND CRESCENT was involved in an accident in Purvis MS on Jan 3. A 1974-model truck stalled on the track on the main street crossing. At 4:44pm train 19, running 48mins late, struck the truck, demolishing it and killing the 84-year old driver who ignored the urgings of bystanders to leave the truck after it repeatedly refused to start. The train left Purvis at 5:10pm with no damage to it or to railroad facilities. Consist of #19 was engines 261 & 258, cars 1236, 1624, 4737, 4738, 4714, 4634, 4629, 4725, 21063, 3108, 8513, 2431, and 2997 "Pine Ridge".....

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND would be bolstered by an increase in the motor fuel tax from 4¢ a gallon to 9¢. The plan, by DOT Secretary Drew Lewis, would give 4¢ of the increase to the Trust Fund and a penny to mass transit.....

★ ★ ★

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS equipment now has a layover of 26hrs, 40mins in New Orleans, since the recent schedule change (later New Orleans arrival and earlier departure)...

FIRST LOUNGE CAR of the Amfleet II series, delivered by Budd to Amtrak on Dec 23, is numbered 28001. It shares the following characteristics with the coaches: one vestibule; manually-sliding doors; vestibule door windows that slide down manually to trainman can peer out; fresh water toilets (Superliner system using vacuum); exterior paint scheme like Heritage Fleet cars; and larger windows than Amfleet I. The lounge car is equipped thus: "A" end of car has toilets (one regular and one handicapped; "A" end has lounge seating for 17 and a large dry storage locker; "B" end has Amdinette furniture seating 32 at eight tables, and six dry storage lockers. The cafe area in the middle of the car has no security shield, but a return to the padlocks used by the railroads for so many years; a 5-foot long wall at the cafe, on top of the service bar to screen the griddle from the public; a griddle with exhaust fan suitable for cooking eggs, pancakes, hamburgers, etc.; 3-compartment sink meeting FDA requirements for dish washing and the washing of kitchen equipment; loading doors on both sides of the cafe, permitting attendants to load and unload supplies directly into the center of the car without dragging them down the aisles.....

★ ★ ★

THE SILVER STAR got its second HEP consist on Jan 7 out of New York. On that date train 81 consisted of mail car, baggage dorm, two sleepers, Amfleet II coaches 25014, 12, 13, (St. Pete section:) Heritage lounge, Amfleet II coaches 25011, 5, 3, sleeper. When the SILVER STAR began going to Amfleet II, the train's size was cut back from 17 to 15 cars. When the second Amfleet II consist appeared, size was again reduced, to 13 cars. As of Jan 12 the second Amfleet II consist was 12 cars, with five coaches and the rest Heritage Fleet. Amfleet II coaches now showing up in the two consists include the numbers 25000 thru 25014, except that 25010 has never appeared, and 25002, 25006 and 25012 have dropped out. The conversion to HEP has helped the train's timekeeping in this month's cold weather, reports a Sanford FL observer. Southbound timekeeping at Sanford of 10 HEP trains this month was an average lateness of 15mins, compared to an average of just over an hour late for 20 steam-heated trainsets. Amfleet II coaches 25005 and 25011 were also in service on the SILVER METEOR, train 88, on Jan 2.....

ERROR-RIDDEN TIMETABLE: Since readers have found anumber of errors in the current Amtrak system timetable, they have been inspired to look at it more closely and have found even more (besides those given in RTN 235, p. 20): (1) on map on page 31, Jacksonville-New Orleans bus is shown as terminating in Pensacola, and page number 49 shown should be 29 (that counts as 2 errors);

(2) page 47--San Francisco SP station is given as 47th St instead of 4th St/ (3) map, page 30--dots remain on map for Missoula MT and Rosenberg TX, tho the names have been removed (why is Carson City NV shown?); (4) page 43--the symbol for "complete dining and beverage service" is shown for the EMPIRE BUILDER Portland section, but only lounge car items are available; (5) page 53--Chicago city ticket office is not on Jackson Blvd, having moved long before timetable was out to Michigan Ave; (6) page 55--Pitcairn PA is listed as appearing in the schedule on page 32, but should be page 35; (7) page 56--Whitford PA is shown as appearing on pp. 24-25, but should be pp. 22-23.....

REACHING MEDFORD, OREGON is now possible via a bus connection, on Idaho Pacific buses, to and from the COAST STARLIGHT at Klamath Falls. Service was effective Nov 15, and should appear in the next Amtrak timetables. Eastbound bus 11E leaves Medford at 8:10pm and reaches K. Falls at 10:10 to connect with train 11. Eastbound bus 14E leaves Medford 3:40am and hits K. Falls at 5:40am to connect with train 14. Westbound bus 11W, from train 11, leaves K. Falls at 11:10pm and westbound bus 14W leaves at 6:40am (from train 14), both making a 2-hour trip to Medford. A 15-passenger van is used, and stops in Medford are at the Greyhound and Trailways bus depots, and at the RVTD terminal, 6th & Bartlett. Intermediate stops on the route can be made when prior arrangements are made with the Amtrak res office. Adult fare is $12 each way, children 2-11 half-fare, and there is a 25% senior citizen discount. The Trainbus res office is at (503) 779-2122.....

★ ★ ★

AMTRAK BOARD MEETING of Dec 9 included a peculiar Commitment Approval Request --for the sale of dome car 9363, ex-GN lounge car "Lake View", as noted in RTN 235. It turns out that the SP was the buyer of the car, and they wanted it to use the 3-axle trucks in rebuilding one of their business cars, scrapping the rest of the dome car. The car has sat in the Oakland CA yard since its last use, on the southbound 4449 special last April, but it disappeared in December, and its present disposition is a mystery. Has SP bought it and scrapped it? Why did Amtrak not sell instead its sister car 9364 "Prairie View", now sitting in L.A. in worse condition but with apparently useable trucks?.....

A NEW BROCHURE in four colors, featuring the Superliners, is just out from Amtrak. "See America at see level" is the theme of the small folder.....

BRITISH TRAIN CRASH on Dec 11 20 miles west of London occurred in heavy snowstorm that snarled all transportation. Two trains collided, killing five.....

SEPTEMBER RIDERSHIP FIGURES were not quite ready as we go to press, but Amtrak gave out this summary of fiscal year 1981 ridership. Overall, it was down 2.9% from FY 1980; 1981 had 20,609,944 passengers while 1980 had 21,219,419. The NE Corridor was down 9.8%, short distance was up 6.8%,and long distance was up 5.0%. The NE Corridor drop accounted for the overall decline, and Amtrak said it was due to the recession and the accompanying decline in business travel, and to competition from cutrate air fares.....

AMTRAK'S 1982 FORECAST: the corporation's top marketing analyst, Robert E. Gall, Assistant VP-Market Planning and Analysis, said that a 7% increase in passenger volume and a revenue gain of 23% over the current year are in the offing..

RENO FUN TRAIN begins operation on Jan 29, using Superliner equipment.....

WEEKEND "SKI TRAIN" into the Berkshires of western Massachusetts is being operated by Amtrak--an 84-seat Amcoach added to the LAKE SHORE LIMITED out of Boston, to Pittsfield each Friday, and back on Sunday. A weekend ski package is available at $90 plus rail fare.....

AMTRAK'S 1982 CALENDAR features a Chicago Union Station painting, and is available at $5 from: Amtrak Calendar, Box 311, Addison IL 60101.....

News in this issue is updated thru Jan 17, 1982.

CARS & CONSISTS

*MONTREALER, train 61, White River Junction, Jan 1: engines 308, 499; cars 1454, 2985 "Pine King", 2086 slumbercoach, 20220 Amdinette, 28300 Amcafe, 21857, 21889, 21062, 21037; 30mins late. Same, train 60: engine 350; cars 1450, 2435 "Pacific Meadows", 2085 slumbercoach, 20221 Amdinette, 28302 Amcafe, 21826, 21819; 10mins late. (Lateness due to CV freights.)

*SILVER STAR, train 81, Washington DC Dec 16: engine 952 (E60); cars 1428, 2836 "Missouri Valley", 2532, 5691, 5425, 5413, 4468, 8014 diner, 3343 lounge obs, 5470, 5467, 5417, 5408, 2784 "Seminole County". (Steam-heated cars.)

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, San Jose Jan 1: engines 370, 244; cars 1230 Hi-level 39907, Superliners 31000, 34075, 34041, Hi-levels 39952, 39942, Superliners 33000, 38023, 32019, 32065, 32036. (Six hours late due to detour on UP/BN.)

*CAPTAIN/CANADIAN, VIA train 44/2, Brockville Ont., Dec 21: engines 6539, 6813, 6870, Park, 6 bag-dorm, "Club de la Garnison", 5515, 5511, 2513, 5455, 5574, 3218, 103, 115, dome buffet lounge 510, 5701, "Chateau Latour", "Chateau Viger", "Assiniboine Park".

SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3, Kansas City Dec 27: engines 291, 265, 239; cars 1297, 1251, Hi-level 39938, Superliner 31012, Hi-level 39947, Superliner 34067, Hi-level 39957, Superliners 33013, 38028, 38012, Hi-levels 39960*, 39958*, 39945*, 39950*, Superliners 32058, 32050. (*) indicates cars for special group loading Ft. Madison to Pasadena for Rose Bowl game.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Old 751 will make its last run Thursday, along with 752, 753 and 796. Thus endeth the not-so-great Willamette Valley passenger train experiment.

"Over 17 months, the State of Oregon has spent about $1.3 million, and Amtrak several million dollars more, to subsidize four daily Willamette Valley Express trains between Eugene and Portland. The results have been clearly disappointing: an average of only 150 to 175 people per day used the trains, far short of goals set when the experimental service began.

"To continue running trains for so few, particularly in view of the state's horrendous money problems, would have been sheer folly. But to call the experiment a failure would be unfair."

--Eugene (OR) Register-Guard editorial, Dec 29.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"The problems facing high speed trains in the United States are formidable, but they need to be studied. The rewards could be enormous in the saving of fuel, in revitalizing the downdown areas of big cities, and in relieving the crowding of highways, airways, and airports."

--Chicago Tribune editorial, Dec 15.

(Our cities have sunk so low!)

BACK ISSUES

The entire year volume of 1981--21 issues of Rail Travel News--is now available. All the issues of 1981 are sent in one packet by parcel post for $10. No tax, no postage charge. Also available is our Tenth Anniversary Year, 1980: 18 issues complete for only $8. In addition, we have 1979 (Vol. 9), all 15 issues for $6; 1978 (Vol. 8), all 16 issues for $6; and 1977 (Vol. 7), all 22 issues for $8. Or all of the above for $35 postpaid.

Address: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

RAIL FANTRIPS

Feb 12-15: Southern California Sojourn: Bay Area to Orange Empire Rwy Museum via SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA; SAN DIEGAN, San Diego Trolley, SAN JOAQUIN. $225. Bay Area Electric Railroad Ass'n, PO Box 5694, San Francisco CA 94119.

Apr 2-4: SBC-FCP Empalme Getaway: Mexicali-Empalme RT on Sonora-Baja Calif. RR & Ferrocarril del Pacifico; visit FDC shops at Empalme. Roomette or bedroom $135 ea. Let's Travel Tours, Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. 714-787-8350.

May 15: Coachella Valley Daylight: L.A.-Pomona-Yuma RT, lv 8:10am back 7:45pm. Superliners. San Timeoteo Canyon, Salton Sea, Colorado River, etc. $70 before 3/1, $75 after. Pacific RR Society, Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. 684-7458.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

EXPRESS ADS

MASTERS OF RAIL TRAVEL--and Amtrak is our specialty. We enjoy seeing that you have the best accommodations available. Call or write us--GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105; (415) 398-2994. Receive your tickets by mail--pay by check or credit card. It's easy--one call does it all

DINING CAR CHINA, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports. Many railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, KS 67213. Will buy items.

Read the most current, authoritative news on timetables--rail, bus, air, transit, ship, in the "First Edition" published monthly by the National Association of Timetable Collectors. Annual dues $15 to: Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland PA 18966. Members also receive the fabulous historical quarterly magazine "The Timetable Collector."

SCANNER ENTHUSIASTS..Bearcat model 100 hand-held SYNTHESIZED scanner now ready. No crystals required to reveive any RAIL-police-fire frequency. Low and highbank VHF, UHF. Complete with carry case, battery charger/AC adapter, earplug & antenna. $379.00 shipped UPS. Calif. Res add $22.74 sales tax.
Ed Von Nordeck, P O Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. 714-781-2930.

ANNOUNCING THE 1982 CITIZENS FOR RAIL CALIFORNIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE in Sacramento Feb. 26-28. Amtrak, Caltrans, discussion sessions on various rail passenger topics. Information from CRC, 2938 Loyola Dr, Davis CA 95616. Come learn about the California phenomenon: add service while the nation cuts back.

DELAWARE VALLEY RAILS, the complete railroad and rail transit guide to the Philadelphia region. $11.50 (Pennsylvaniana, add 69¢ tax). $12.50 outside U.S. John R. Pawson, Box 411, Willow Grove, PA 19090.

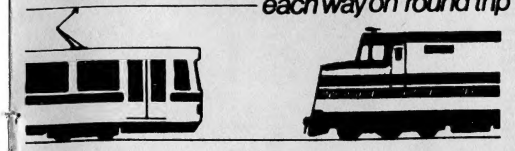
EURAIL PASS PRICES FOR 1982: 15 day $250; 21 day $320; 1 month $390; 2 months $530; 3 months $650. YOUTH EURAIL PASS: 1 month $260; 2 months $350. Pass is good for use 6 months from purchase date. Please make check to Accent on Travel, 1030 Curtis St, Menlo Park CA 94025. Include passport number & date of birth.

AMTRAK Transcontinental Circle fares Jan 15 thru Apr 24. 14 or 30-day tickets offering circle fares in the West or combined with West and Eastern trains. Good in sleepers, stopovers may be made, Family Plan and senior discount apply. Ask us for details: LET'S TRAVEL TOURS, P O Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. Phone 714-781-2930 or 787-8350. Rail Travel experts since 1951.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

TIJUANA BY TRAIN $50.25

each way on round trip



Any evening, you can get on board the new night train to L.A. Only $34.50 each way on a round trip.

At L.A.'s beautiful Union Station, you have just enough time for a stroll by historic Olvera Street, before boarding the 10:20 a.m. San Diegan. Total fare so far: $49.25.

San Diego's sleek new red "trolleys" take you right to the border for $1.00 more.

That adds up to a bargain — and a scenic adventure, too!

THE RAIL WAY TO SEE CALIFORNIA !

(Fares from Sacramento or Bay Area points.)
This ad sponsored as a public service by the Modern Transit Society of Sacramento, P.O. Box 981, Sacramento 95805, and RTN.

KRUGERRANDS and MAPLE LEAFS
STORE SURPLUS ASSETS IN GOLD
1% commission at all times.
Phone (303) 387-5336
Experienced, Dependable
The Alma House

OLD MAP KIT

Consisting of Old State and Railroad maps 70-110 years old. All States. Some old County maps. Stamp for catalog.

The Northern Map Co.
Dept. RT Dunnellon, FL 32630.

Carl Loucks

....Selling Railroad Timetables

Employee Timetables, Public Timetables, Brochures, Guides, Postcards, Tickets, a full line of transporation paper items. New catalogue issued monthly. Stamped Self Addressed Envelope for latest list and specials.

199 Wayland St., Hamden, Ct. 06518

Ted and Sylvia Blishak, owners of Accent on Travel, are frequent RTN contributors.
Accent on Travel holds Amtrak's "Golden Spike Award" for high ticket sales.

DON'T DIAL AMTRAK! Dial Ted and Sylvia Blishak at (415) 326-7331 for your reservations and AVOID BUSY SIGNALS AND "HOLDS"! Low fares for families, handicapped travelers, senior citizens. We also sell Britrail and Eurail passes, cruises, and air tickets.
Call "The Railfans" at Accent on Travel, 1030 Curtis Street, Menlo Park, California 94025. (415) 326-7331.